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Ford expected to name Rumsfeld defense chief

The happiest man on President Ford's flight home from Florida was Henry Kissinger, who laughed and joked most of the way. Now everybody knows why.

By Harry Kelly

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WASHINGTON—President Ford intends to name Donald Rumsfeld secretary of defense in one of a series of moves that has shaken up the administration's first team, stunned the capital Monday, and resolved a growing dispute between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the fired Pentagon chief, James Schlesinger.

As the President canceled all his engagements to brief congressional leaders on the events—being likened to the "Saturday Night Massacre"—for their swiftness and surprise—the White House became officially silent until Ford holds a press conference called for 6:30 p.m. Chicago time Monday.

Many Washington sources, however, contend the President decided to act in the Kissinger-Schlesinger feud after the secretary of state denounced Schlesinger and William Colby, CIA chief, in what a congressional source called "a temper tantrum."

COLBY IS reported to have been fired along with Schlesinger.

The sources expressed doubt there was any connection between Vice President Rockefeller's announcement that he will not run on the ticket in 1976 and the firings of Schlesinger and Colby. But it left politicians and columnists searching for a link.

Some administration sources speculated the principal link between Rockefeller's announcement and the Cabinet changes was timing—that Schlesinger's ouster would be lost in the conservative glow over Rockefeller's decision not to run.

There was one certain result. Although Ford's decision to accept Rockefeller's "I won't run" will delight conservatives, the ouster of Schlesinger has angered many pro-militarists who regard him as a brilliant Pentagon spokesman and a victim of detente.

CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES, who declined to be identified, noted a series of Kissinger-Schlesinger disputes on military and diplomatic issues, including the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT). But they expressed belief they all came to a climax last week.

Kissinger, according to these sources, was angered by the amount of secret information made available to a House Select Committee, which grilled him about intelligence matters Friday.

Both Schlesinger and Colby have cooperated with the congressional committees to a degree, sources said, that Kissinger considered excessive.

In addition, a story was leaked to a nationally syndicated columnist Saturday that Kissinger, as part of the feud, was withholding from Ford Schlesinger's

secret deployment plans for U.S. forces in Europe.

KISSINGER, ACCORDING to these sources—some of whom are admittedly critical of the secretary of state—gave Ford an "It's him or me" ultimatum—and Ford chose to keep Kissinger.

While the first word of his high-level shifts was leaked Sunday, Ford relayed a more certified report to congressional leaders Monday morning in advance of his press conference.

The substitutions in the Ford first team would be these, according to reports from those who have heard from Ford:

- ◆ Rumsfeld, 43, Ford's chief of staff and a former Illinois congressman, will replace Schlesinger in the Pentagon. There was speculation that Rumsfeld would be replaced by Richard Cheney, another White House aide with political campaign responsibilities, or Rogers C. B. Morton, secretary of commerce and former Republican national chairman.

- ◆ George Bush, another former GOP national chairman and now United States representative to the People's Republic of China, will replace Colby as CIA director.

- ◆ Sen. Hugh Scott (R., Pa.), the Senate minority leader who reportedly will

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